



## Michelle YEOH 楊紫瓊 ( b. 1962 )

### Actress, Producer

A Malaysian Chinese of Tong'an, Fujian descent, Michelle Yeoh was born in the state of Perak. Her father was a lawyer. She learnt ballet from a young age and at the age of 15 immigrated with her family to England where she enrolled at the Royal Academy of Dance, majoring in dance and minoring in theatre. She returned to Malaysia after graduation. In 1983 she won first place in a beauty contest, after which she was invited by Dickson Poon, an agent of a local watch brand, to go to Hong Kong to star in the brand's commercial, thus began Yeoh's on-screen career.

In September 1984, D & B Films Co., Ltd. signed Yeoh as a regular actor. She played in *The Owl vs Bumbo* (1984) but was unable to stand out. She then trained under a number of martial artists, and subsequently shooting to fame as a police inspector in *Yes, Madam* (1985). This was quickly followed by *Royal Warriors* (1986) in which she played alongside celebrated Japanese actor Sanada Hiroyuki (aka Henry Sanada); this further enhanced her reputation. She then starred in the large production *Magnificent Warriors* (1987). Although the film's reception was average, Yeoh's image as a modern action heroine left a firm impression and even charmed overseas markets. Frequent injuries because of shooting led to the adjustment of her image in *Easy Money* (1987) in which she played a mysterious heist-hatching millionaire. In February 1988, she married Dickson Poon and withdrew from the limelight. After her marriage ended in 1991, she returned to acting, starring in *Police Story III: Supercop* (1992). This was followed by a great number of projects and in more versatile roles than when she was at D & B. Besides action titles *Butterfly and Sword* (1993), *The Heroic Trio* (1993), *Executioners* (1993), *The Tai-Chi Master* (1993), and *Wing Chun* (1994), she acted in dramas like *Ah Kam* (1996) which portrays the lives of action artists; she also played historical figure Soong Ai-ling in *The Soong Sisters* (1997). During this time, Yeoh recruited Terence Chang to be her agent and subsequently set foot in the Western film world. She subverted the image of the Bond girl as a valiant colonel in *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997) to great applause. For her role as the steely reticent Yu Xiulian in Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), she received Best Actress nomination at the 20th Hong Kong Film Awards, the 37th Golden Horse Awards, and the 54th British Academy Film Awards. In 2001, Yeoh founded Mythical Films Production (HK) Ltd which made *The Touch* (2002) and *Silver Hawk* (2004), for which she was both producer and actor. She was also the line producer for the documentary *PAD YATRA: A Green Odyssey* (2013). Yeoh later starred in films like *Master Z: The Ip Man Legacy* (2018), *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) and *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021).

In 1999 and 2002, Yeoh served as a member of the jury at the Berlin International Film Festival and Cannes Film Festival respectively. In 2008, she founded SC Entertainment Group Ltd with Terence Chang and others to nurture film talents for the film industry. In 2013, the 7th Asian Film Awards honoured her with the Asian Film Award for Excellence in Asian Cinema. In 2023, she became the first Asian actress to win the 95th Academy Award for Best Actress for *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022).

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